

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 242276

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ORIGIN EA-09

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 SP-02 NSC-05 NSCE-00 CIAE-00 SS-15

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O 292117Z SEP 76
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY TOKYO IMMEDIATE
INFO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 242276

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, SREF, UR, US, JA

SUBJECT: WASHINGTON MEETING BETWEEN BELENKO, SOVIET
EMBASSY REPS

REF: STATE 241529

1. EMBASSY MAY PASS CONTENTS REFTEL TO GOJ ON CONFIDENTIAL
BASIS. DEPARTMENT INFORMED JAPANESE EMBASSY YESTERDAY
(9/28) THAT MEETING WAS TO TAKE PLACE AND BRIEFED EMBOFF
ON GENERAL RESULTS MORNING OF SEPTEMBER 29.

2. WE HAVE INFORMED EMBASSY THAT PRESS GUIDANCE HAS BEEN
PREPARED FOR UPON IF ASKED BASIS (BELENKO MEETING DID NOT
ARISE DURING 29 SEPT. PRESS BRIEFING).

3. CONTINGENCY PRESS GUIDANCE FOLLOWS:
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PAGE 02 STATE 242276

QUESTION: WITH REGARD TO THE MIG-25 PILOT, BELENKO WHAT CAN YOUR TELL US ABOUT HIS WHEREABOUTS?

ANSWER: YESTERDAY (SEPTEMBER 28) HE WAS IN THE STATE DEPARTMENT BUILDING. THE SOVIET EMBASSY HAD ASKED LAST WEEK TO TALK TO HIM. THE DEPARTMENT SAID IT WOULD ARRANGE A MEETING IF MR. BELENKO AGREED. HE DID CONSENT TO MEET

WITH SOVIET EMBASSY REPRESENTATIVES, AND THE MEETING TOOK PLACE YESTERDAY.

QUESTION: WHO ATTENDED FROM THE SOVIET EMBASSY?

ANSWER: I CAN'T GO INTO THE DETAILS ABOUT THE MEETING, EXCEPT TO SAY THAT IT PROVIDED AN OPPORTUNITY FOR MR. BELENKO TO MAKE HIS VIEWS KNOWN TO SOVIET REPRESENTATIVES.

QUESTION: DID THE SOVIETS HAVE A RIGHT TO INSIST ON A MEETING WITH BELENKO?

ANSWER: NO. IF A SOVIET CITIZEN IS UNDER ARREST OR DETENTION, WE ARE O'LIGED TO GFANT THE SOVIET EMBASSY ACCESS UNDER THE US-USSR CONSULAR CONVENTION, BUT MR. BELENKO IS NOT UNDER ARREST OR DETENTION. HE IS A FREE MAN.

QUESTION: THEN WHY DID YOU ARRANGE THE MEETING?

ANSWER: MR. BELENKO AGREED TO THE MEETING SO THAT THE SOVIETS COULD HEAR FROM HIM HIS OWN VIEWS AND WISHES. THEREFORE, WE ARRANGED THE MEETING.

QUESTION: WHAT DID HE TELL THEM?

ANSWER: AGAIN, I CAN'T GO INTO DETAILS, BUT HE INDICATED HIS WISH TO REMAIN HERE AND THAT HIS DECISION TO DO SO WAS HIS OWN.

QUESTION: WHAT IS OUR RESPONSE TO THE CHARGE THAT CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 03 STATE 242276

GRANTING BELENKO ASYLUM IS "TANTAMOUNT TO SPLITTING A FAMILY BY FORCE"?

ANSWER: THERE WAS NO FORCE. BELENKO HIMSELF ASKED TO COME HERE.

QUESTION: WHERE IS HE NOW AND HOW LONG WILL HIS DEBRIEFING TAKE?

ANSWER: I AM NOT ABLE TO COMMENT ON THAT.

QUESTION: DID PRESIDENT FORD RECEIVE A LETTER FROM
BELENKO'S WIFE?

ANSWER: THE DEPARTMENT RECEIVED THE LETTER FROM THE SOVIET
EMBASSY YESTERDAY (SEPTEMBER 28). WE ARE TRANSLATING IT
AND WILL FORWARD IT TO THE WHITE HOUSE. ROBINSON

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